

USDA Farm to School Team Monthly Report May & June 2010

Site Visits:

- In May 2010 the USDA Farm to School Team began site visits to fifteen selected school districts of nearly 300 districts which had expressed interest in receiving a visit from the Team. The selected districts represent nine areas across the country of varied demographics and implementation stages of farm to school. During the site visits, the Team has met with school district administrators, local farmers, local and state authorities, students, teachers, parents, and community partners to analyze and assess variables that support or deter farm-to-school activities, both from the school and farmer perspectives. The information gathered during these site visits will be used to develop and/or reissue appropriate resource materials, guidance, and technical assistance for both schools and farmers. A full summary of observations, challenges and best practices will be shared on the Farm to School Website. Thus far, the Team has made visits to the following school districts:
 - Independence Community School District in Independence, IA (May 2010);
 - Burlington Public Schools in Burlington, VT (May 2010);
 - Eugene School District in Eugene, OR (May 2010);
 - Bethel School District in Eugene, OR (May 2010);
 - Jefferson County Public School District in Louisville, KY (May 2010);
 - Montgomery County Public School District in Mount Sterling, KY (May 2010);
 - Harrisonburg City Public Schools in Harrisonburg, VA (June 2010);
 - Boston Public Schools in Boston, MA (June 2010); and
 - Jamestown Public Schools in Jamestown, RI (June 2010).

The Team will schedule visits to the three remaining areas (CA, OK, and WI), representing six additional school districts, in the fall, prior to the end of Fiscal Year 2010. Currently, the Farm to School Team is consolidating the observations, challenges and best practices learned during the Team's spring site visits.

Policy Development/Technical Assistance:

- Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) agency received comments on the propose rule, *Geographic Preference Option for Procurement of Unprocessed Agricultural Products in Child Nutrition Programs*, which was published in the *Federal Register* on April 18, 2010. Comments on the proposed rule were due to FNS by June 18, 2010. FNS is currently reviewing these comments for the development of a final rule, which is scheduled to be issued later this year.
- Provided suggested areas of research for the Center for Disease Control's School Health Policies and Programs Study (SHPPS) 2012.
- On May 18, 2010, procurement Q&As related to local food purchases were published on the USDA Farm to School website at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S/f2spolicy.htm>.
- Provided input to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) for a CDC publication geared toward farm to school systems. The publication is in the initial draft phase and is currently under review.
- On June 25, 2010, the Farm to School Team's first webinar, hosted on March 10, 2010, was posted to the Farm to School website, along with the agenda, presentation handouts and Q&As from the webinar at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S/sightssoundsstories.htm>.
- Began to develop additional webpages that will focus on the operation and support of farm to school activities. The webpages will include information on working with farmers and schools, distribution models, impacts of farm to school, food safety, lessons learned and best practices,

grants that support farm to school activities, school and community resources, and supporting activities (e.g., school gardens).

Meetings/Conferences/Presentations:

- On May 16-19, 2010, the USDA Farm to School Team attended the 5th Annual National Farm to Cafeteria Conference in Detroit, MI. The Team gave three presentations which included: procurement requirements in the school meal programs; how producers can market to schools; and an overview of the USDA Farm to School Team. The Team also provided farm to school related materials to conference attendees through USDA's information table. Deputy Secretary Merrigan gave the keynote address the morning of May 19, 2010 which included highlights of the activities USDA is engaged in to support farm to school.
- On May 20, 2010, the Deputy Associate Administrator for Food and Nutrition Service debriefed members of the media with Deputy Secretary Merrigan on the USDA Farm to School Team's goals and activities.
- On June 16, 2010, members of the Farm to School Team presented to the Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Coordinators at CDC's annual Association of State and Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors (ASTPHND) conference in Baltimore, MD.
- On June 22, 2010, the Team's Lead presented at the CT Grown: Networking & Planning Meeting in Norwich, CT.
- On June 29, 2010, a member of the Farm to School Team presented an overview of the Team's activities and Farm to School website at the Partnerships for Urban Agriculture Work Group meeting.
- Members of the Farm to School Team continue to meet regularly with the National Farm to School Network and other Farm to School stakeholders to discuss future collaborations on Farm to School activities.
- Regular meetings/conference calls are scheduled with core and resource team members.

Upcoming Events (Fourth Quarter FY2010):

1. Present at the School Nutrition Association's Annual National Conference in Dallas, TX (July 11-14, 2010)
2. The Farm to School Team plans to host its second farm to school webinar (mid-August)